

***HOT SPRINGS COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 1***

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Greetings HSCSD #1 Patrons,

I am writing with an update to our SMART Start Back to School plans for school this fall. HSCSD #1 is planning on as normal a start to the school year as possible, but will follow direction from local and state officials as the year progresses. There are many questions about what school will look like in the fall in regard to the current pandemic. The information that I share I want to stress is preliminary, and based on current recommendations. District Smart Start Plans are due to the Wyoming Department of Education by August 3rd, where they will await approval. We will also be linking the guidance that was provided by State Superintendent of Public Instruction Jillian Balow and her SMART Start Committee for your review on the District webpage [www.hotsprings1.org](http://www.hotsprings1.org). I cannot stress the importance enough of realizing that medical professionals and state leaders will be making recommendations for schools to follow, and that schools will need to comply for student safety. Currently we are listed as Tier 1 guidance with most students in school with CDC guidance in place. Tier 2 or Tier 3 in the guidance would be directives from the Wyoming Department of Education.

**Parents before school:** Parents need to screen students carefully each morning for signs of a fever, or symptoms of illness. If a student is ill they should remain at home. Current recommendations are for the District to not screen every child for a fever upon arrival. Students that are found to be ill, will need to be sent home at any time during the day.

**Transportation:** Buses will run, bus stops will be approved, and based on numbers of students could change to keep groups small. Students will be required to wear a mask on the bus because social distancing is not possible. We will be encouraging parents that can transport students on their own to do so.

**School Arrival:** The current plans are for students to have separate entries that will be designated and shared by each building. Firm times will be posted about when building doors will open for students to enter the buildings in the morning, to prevent congregation in foyers etc. Currently the District is asking parents not to drop off students prior to 7:50 with the exception of zero hour high school students. The District appreciates parent efforts to hold to these drop off times.

**Breakfast and Lunch:** will be served, and cafeteria seating will be marked, and meals will be staggered to promote social distancing. The food service staff has eliminated areas of student self service, and will be masked when serving to protect student health. Water bottle filling stations are being added in all buildings to promote hydration without the use of the traditional water fountains.

**Recess:** Currently recess is planned with the only change being cohort or grade level areas assigned. This will promote student activity and allow for social distancing as much as possible.

**Physical Education Classes:** PE will primarily be outside weather permitting, and will utilize social distancing measures.

**Athletics and Activities:** The Wyoming High School Activities Association has put out draft guidelines for activities and the District is planning on our students participating in activities as allowed by health and

state officials. Numbers for spectators is still an ongoing discussion, and may change multiple times between now and the initiation of fall activities.

**Cleanliness and Handwashing:** The District is taking several steps including more frequent and thorough disinfection of buildings, equipment, and surfaces, and students and staff will be utilizing frequent hand washing opportunities, as well as the use of hand sanitizers.

**Use of masks and social distancing:** Students and staff will be required to utilize masks when social distancing cannot be maintained or it is necessary to work individually teacher to student. The SMART Start guidance states that to the greatest extent possible mask use and social distancing will be utilized.

**Communication:** Because there may be many changes throughout the year the District has established a streamlined communication system with the community that we will utilize upon student return. HSCSD #1 would encourage all patrons to utilize the [www.hotsprings1.org](http://www.hotsprings1.org) website as much as possible. Not all patrons have Facebook or other social media, and because of the algorithms utilized some do not see the post. The District webpage will be a hub for communication. Additionally, the District has added the text feature to our “all-call” system, so parents that cannot answer a call, can receive the information via text. Please make sure that you have your text information included with student registration.

Last spring during our closure at times it was difficult to know where to look for the latest academic information because of the mass communication around academics. The District has streamlined this process. K-4 students and parents will receive all academic communication through their new Learning Management System called Schoology. They will also receive all work through Schoology in the event of a hybrid or closure. In grades 5-12 all academic communication will come through the Remind App, and all assignments will be in your child’s Google classroom. Additionally, 5-12 teachers will be posting assignments to the district webpage, to be prepared for a closure, or any student that may be quarantined, or just sick that day that wanted to maintain their school work. This streamlined system should eliminate confusion for parents and students should we face a hybrid or shutdown situation.

In closing, I know that these are things that are difficult to take into consideration as parents. We are taking a positive approach at the District hoping that we are close to normal, but prepared for anything, and ready to deliver great instruction to our students. We must take student and staff safety seriously, and keep it as our top priority. I would encourage patrons to watch the facebook live feed next Tuesday of our Hot Springs County Board of Trustees meeting where each principal from each building will give a brief overview of their plans that will be sent to the SMART Start Team at the Wyoming Department of Education for approval in August. I would also encourage you to view the SMART Start Guidance on our website: [www.hotsprings1.org](http://www.hotsprings1.org), or by following this link: <https://edu.wyoming.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Smart-Start-Guidance.pdf> Have a great weekend and please stay safe and healthy

Respectfully,

Dustin Hunt  
Superintendent  
Hot Springs County School District #1